



# Crossroads



77 8 5

## Chapter 1 by Aisha

The first day she saw him, she knew that she wanted to get to know him. He wasn't from around there and she wondered when she would see him again. A few weeks past but Jessica could still not get the mysterious guy out of her mind. Saturday came and she and her girlfriends decided that they would go to one of their favourite spots. They had a lot of fun and when she looked up, she saw a guy sitting across from her but she couldn't make out who it was. Funny thing, he was staring at her. She decided to walk past as curiosity got the best of her. As she walked past him, she couldn't believe who he was!

## Chapter 2 by SaintSayaka



Her father's murderer.

Her heart stopped dead in its track.

She remembered that night as vividly as anything. The cheeseburgers in their grease soaked bags leaking onto the console. Her dad gently chiding her about boys, and hormones, and makeup. The screeching tires. The wrong side of the road. The car flipping, flipping, over the bridge...

The car that got them off course was abandoned after the accident. It had no license plate, and no local dealer had any record of ever selling it. There was a face behind the wheel that Jessica saw. Her description of it never got the police anywhere.

And now here it was, in their local bowling alley.

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Chapter 3 by SaintSayaka

Her first reaction, of course,

He didn't recognize her.

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her, face full of concern.

Her friend grabbed her shoulder tightly, and only then did Jessica's voice catch in her throat, like a little faucet finally cutting off its water supply. "Jesus christ, Jessica! What are you doing?" She turned to look at the man, smile sickeningly apologetic. "I'm sorry. She's not usually like this."

He raised his hands. "It's fine. This place is bit of a dump, anyway. You probably saw a mouse, right?" He was locking eyes with Jessica now, no sign of a lie present in his kind smile and relaxed posture. She felt herself nodding. Why was she nodding? Her neck ached from the effort. None of this was right.

Her friend laughed. "That's what this is about? Dude, your mom runs an extermination business. You should be used to that sort of thing by now."

It was her dad's business before he died, she wanted to say. She wanted to see if the man would react. But her friend was already leading her away, chiding her gently and mentioning how, "out of all of the men you could have embarrassed yourself in front of in the bowling ally, you chose the cutest one!"

Her friend was kind of an ass. All of them were. Jessica didn't have a choice. Any friends were better than none. Especially when she came back from school after a year of therapy. She didn't want anyone thinking that she was a freak.

Her and her friend returned to their lane, where Allison was already on her third beer. None of Jessica's friends liked to bowl, but they sure did like how the servers here didn't ID.

Maybe a beer or two would help. After all, it would distract Jessica from the man's presence. But somehow, she knew that she had to stay sober.

This gut instinct, as it turned out, would keep her alive.

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